

An Investigation of Animal Cruelty Cases in Ohio

Honors Research Thesis

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Distinction

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Abstract:

Animal cruelty is widespread, affecting millions of animals each year. All US states have enacted felony-level animal cruelty legislation. Reporting is not standardized and there has been minimal research into the metrics of these crimes at the state or national level. In Ohio, Goddard's Law revised penalties such that intentional cruelty leading to serious harm can be charged as a 5th degree felony instead of a misdemeanor. The goal of this project is to analyze case records associated with animal cruelty charges filed in Ohio to identify trends and associations including a comparison of data before and after Goddard's Law took effect on September 13, 2016.

A public records request was sent to all 231 Municipal, County, and Common Pleas courts in Ohio requesting records for each animal cruelty charge filed over a three-year period. For those that did not respond within four months, the request was repeated. Official online court records, when available, were used to resolve incomplete data. Relevant case information was manually entered into Microsoft Excel and all analysis were conducted using statistical software. Of 231 courts, 212 (92%) responded to the public records request, including at least 1 court from every county. In total, 2,499 charges were filed including 96 (4%) felonies and 2,311 (92%) misdemeanors. Franklin County reported the most, 557/2,499 (22%). The most common outcomes included 1,101/2,339 (47%) dismissed and 971/2,339 (42%) guilty. Jail time was ordered for 696/2,339 (30%) of the charges, though all except 208/696 (30%) of jail terms were suspended; 281/2,339 (12%) resulted in some type of animal restriction and 583/2,339 (25%) resulted in fines. Charges were filed against 1,165 people, including 205/466 (44%) women and 261/466 (56%) men.

This study is the first to examine animal cruelty crimes in Ohio and will provide valuable information for policymakers and those working in law enforcement and animal welfare sectors.

Introduction:

Animal cruelty is widespread and affects millions of animals each year. All states within the United States have enacted felony-level animal cruelty legislation to punish those convicted and to act as a deterrent. In the state of Ohio, section 959 of The Ohio Revised Code² contains the animal cruelty laws for domestic animals. Specifically, section 959.131 of the Ohio Revised Code outlines the laws for cruelty to companion animals. House Bill 60¹, known as Goddard's Law, revised provisions and penalties regarding the treatment of companion animals in Ohio. As of September 13, 2016, section 959.131C of the Ohio Revised Code², stating "no person shall knowingly cause serious physical harm to a companion animal," can be punishable as a 5th degree felony as well as a 1st or 2nd degree misdemeanor, depending on the severity of the harm.

Appendix C contains a list of Ohio Revised Code sections from 959 including the charges and penalties for each offense. This includes crimes such as torture, mutilation, beating, poisoning, deprivation of food or water, and inadequate shelter. All of crimes charged in Section 959.131 are misdemeanors except for Section 959.131C, which can be charged as a misdemeanor or a felony depending on the severity of the crime. This statute states that "No person shall knowingly cause serious physical harm to a companion animal"³. Organized dog fighting is also a felony in Ohio; however, it is included under a different section of the law, which was not affected by Goddard's law, so it was not considered in this study.

Serious and often violent crimes are considered felonies. These carry stiffer penalties, including prison sentences of 12 months or more.¹¹ A misdemeanor is a less serious, usually non-violent, crime punishable by less than 12 months in jail. Community service, probation, and fines are also commonly issued punishments for misdemeanors. Both misdemeanors and felonies are assigned a degree between 1 and 5. These are basically a scale of the seriousness of the crime

and each increase in degree carries an increase in potential punishment. The least serious crime is a 5th degree misdemeanor (M5) and the most serious crime is a 1st degree felony (F1).

In Ohio, misdemeanors are handled and records are kept in Municipal or County Courts, depending on the specific county. A Municipal Court serves an area that is smaller than a county, usually large cities, and many counties have more than one. A County Court serves areas not covered by an existing Municipal Court, and in some cases, they serve an entire county. Felonies are handled by the Court of Common Pleas and records are kept at the Clerk of Courts' office in each county. There is only one Court of Common Pleas in each county. Ohio has 231 courts of record; 88 are Courts of Common Pleas and 143 are Municipal or County Courts.

According to a Chief Investigator for the Animal Protective League, a major justification for Goddard's Law was increasing the legal deterrents to animal abuse¹². There are no studies that specifically look at the effectiveness of criminal penalties in the US as a deterrent to animal cruelty; however, there is a study of crimes in Australia that have similar penalties. David Tait (2001) submitted a report to the Criminal Research Council⁵ on the effectiveness of criminal sanctions. In this report, Type 5 Offense, such as property damage, shop-stealing, and offensive behavior, can be categorized as a low-level felony or a misdemeanor depending on the severity of the crime. They found that diversion from lower-level fines to bonds or dismissal were shown to significantly reduce re-conviction rates as compared to diversion from higher to lower level fines or bonds, which had no significant impact. Using this approach, the study estimated that there could be an 18% drop in re-convictions.

Animal cruelty legislation is not standardized across states. and there has been minimal research into the metrics of these crimes at the state or national level. The lack of information surrounding the actual impact of animal cruelty laws is problematic. Animal cruelty and the lack of information about the frequency and severity of these crimes are beginning to be recognized

as a serious issue within the United States and even the FBI is taking notice. The FBI recently made animal cruelty a nationally notifiable crime requiring all police departments to report cases effective January 1, 2016¹⁵. Data is collected on the Bureau's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which breaks animal cruelty into several categories: gross neglect, torture, organized abuse, and sexual abuse¹⁵. One of the major reasons that the FBI began tracking these crimes was due to the well-established link between animal abuse and other crimes.¹⁵ It is too early yet to identify trends in the FBI's dataset, and currently only 31% of the country's police departments are currently reporting.¹⁵ While this is an important step in understanding animal cruelty, this system also fails to capture cases investigated and prosecuted without police involvement, as is the case in many states where humane agents employed by humane societies lead these activities.

A study by Saunder³ in 2000, called for stronger laws citing conclusive evidence from multiple sources indicating that animal abuse and cruelty is associated to violence toward partners, children, and strangers. Additionally, "In a survey of thirty-eight women seeking protection from domestic violence, seventy-one percent of those who owned pets reported that their abusers also harmed or killed their pets. Another study reported that twenty-eight percent of animal abusers were also charged with domestic violence."³ Furthermore, Saunders states that animal cruelty is rarely an isolated incident against one victim, but that there are human and non-human victims that create a web of violence³. This can be extremely damaging to children who witness these acts, since they are more likely to perpetuate these same acts throughout their lives³. Saunder is a proponent of halting the cycle of violence before it escalates to humans and believes harsher laws will accomplish this.

A review⁴ of 2009 legislation by the State of New Hampshire indicates that there are many potential complications surrounding the prosecution of animal cruelty cases that do not

have to do with the misdemeanor or felony classification. Some of these include: reporting and investigation of animal cruelty, delay in legal proceedings, cost of care, and sentencing. While felony charges may bring a higher fine threshold and increased jail time, the challenges associated with prosecuting felonies may outweigh the rewards when other parts of the system are not functioning effectively. While each animal cruelty case is different, proving that a defendant knowingly caused harm to their animal requires a greater burden of proof for prosecutors of felonies. Additionally, serious physical harm must also be proven, which may provide challenges if the animal is decomposing, the origin of the wounds cannot be conclusively determined, or other circumstances arise.

While there are scientific papers calling for increased animal cruelty laws, there are none that have analyzed concrete data to describe the epidemiology of animal cruelty charges filed in a state, much less compare them before and after a significant change in the law.

The objective of this study is to evaluate case data from animal cruelty charges filed in Ohio over a three-year period. The number and type of charges will be examined as well as the demographics of the defendants. The outcomes and sentencing, including fine amounts and length of jail time, for 959.131C, which is the part of the code that Goddard's Law changed will be characterized. Once summarized, the data from before Goddard's law will be compared to the data following its date of enactment date in 2016. This study will provide insight the epidemiology of animal cruelty in Ohio and the differences before and after September 13, 2016.

Materials and Methods:

First, a list of all 231 Common Pleas and Municipal/County Courts, responsible for hearing animal cruelty cases, in the 88 counties of Ohio was compiled. A public records request was submitted to each of the 231 courts by August 14, 2018, via internet, phone, mail, or fax depending on the individual court's requirements (See Appendix A & B). According to the Ohio

Revised Code section 149.13, public records must be prepared in a timely manner and made available for the requester. If a request is denied, an explanation must be given along with the legal authority as to why the request was denied.

Information on misdemeanor charges filed in Ohio was acquired through public records requests sent to Municipal and County Courts requesting information on every charge filed under Section 959.13 and 959.131 of the Ohio Revised Code from April 13, 2015 through April 13, 2018. Information on felony charges was acquired through public records requests sent to the Clerk of Court for each county requesting information on every charge filed under Section 959.131(C) of the Ohio Revised Code from September 13, 2016 through April 13, 2018. For those courts that did not respond to the initial public records request, a duplicate request was sent approximately four months later.

Once courts responded to the public records request, the information was entered in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet by Annika Diaz, an undergraduate student. If a court denied a public record request, it was documented as having responded and the reason for denial was recorded.

The data in the spreadsheet underwent a visual inspection for apparent gaps and errors; information publicly accessible on online court databases, when they were available, were used to verify some data and to locate information that was missing from the provided court records. Charges outside the date range, charges for crimes not requested, and charges with excessive data gaps, were removed from the data set. The remaining data was coded in Microsoft Excel. All descriptive and statistical analysis were conducted using Mentor by Enghouse Interactive Inc, which is a reporting and cross-tabulation program designed for companies in market analysis, telemarketing, market research, and related fields. The statistical analysis was

conducted with the assistance of David Garrett, a Research Director at Market Vision Research. T-tests and chi square test were run on the data to identify statistically significant associations. Because the timeframe of data collected prior to Goddard's Law was not the same as the timeframe of data collected after, the summative data were normalized to the number of charges per month. Total numbers before Goddard's Law were divided by 17 months (4/13/2015 - 9/13/2016) and total numbers after Goddard's Law were divided by 19 months (9/13/2016 - 4/13/2018). This study was determined to be exempt from the Institutional Review Board.

Results:

The response rate for the public records requests was 212/231 (92%). Of those courts responding to the request, 130/212 (61%) provided data, 49/212 (23%) had no charges to report, 33/212 (16%) were unable to fulfill the public records request. The reason cited for all courts unable to fulfill the public records request was that their system did not have the capability to search by the specific charge filed. There were 71/88 (81%) counties with all of their courts responding to the request and 88/88 (100%) of counties had at least one court respond to the public records request.

Over the 3-year study period, 2,499 charges were filed, of which 96 (4%) were felonies and 2,311 (92%) were misdemeanors. Franklin County investigators filed 557 (22%) charges over three years; almost three times more than the next highest county, which was Butler County with 188 charges (7.5%).

Charges were filed against 1,165 individuals; the mean number of charges filed per person was 2 (range 1 to 25). Wood County had the highest average number of charges per person with 5.7, followed by Fairfield County with 4.2 charges per person and then Franklin County with 3.5 charges per person.

The mean age of persons charged with animal cruelty was 39 years with a range of age 18 to 82 years (see Table 1). Among defendants, males (56%) represented slightly more than half of defendants (see Table 3), and Caucasians (70%) had the most charges filed against them compared to any other ethnicity (see Table 2). The sex, age, and ethnicity of defendants charged compared to those convicted did not differ significantly. When comparisons were made of sex and ethnicity of defendants before and after Goddard's Law, they also did not differ significantly.

Table 1: Age of Defendant when Charge Filed

Age of Defendant at Charge Filed Date	Number of Defendants (n=1,031*)
18-25 years	197 (19%)
26-35 years	296 (29%)
36-45 years	243 (24%)
46-55 years	150 (15%)
56-65 years	94 (9%)
66-75 years	43 (4%)
75+ years	8 (1%)

*The court records contained a date of birth or age for 1,1031 of the 1,165 defendants

Table 2: Number of Defendants by Ethnicity

Ethnicity of Defendant	Number of Individuals with Charges Filed Against Them (n=381)	Number of Individuals Found Guilty (n=231)
Caucasian	268 (70%)	155 (67%)
African American	109 (29%)	73 (32%)
Other	3 (<1%)	2 (<1%)
Hispanic	1 (<1%)	1 (<1%)

Table 3: Number of Defendants by Sex

Sex of Defendant	Number of Individuals with Charges Filed Against Them (n=466)	Number of Individuals Found Guilty (n=284)
Male	261 (56%)	157 (55%)
Female	205 (44%)	127 (45%)

There were approximately 55 misdemeanors filed each month before Goddard's Law with approximately 77 misdemeanors filed each month after Goddard's Law. The most common misdemeanors filed were 2nd degree misdemeanors 1,735/2311 (75%) and 1st degree misdemeanors 554/2,311 (22%). There was an increase in the number of charges filed for 2nd degree misdemeanors after Goddard's Law from 36.9 charges per month to 58.2 charges per month (See Table 4). The number of 1st degree misdemeanors stayed the same at 15.4 charges per month before and after Goddard's Law.

Table 4: Comparison of Charges Filed and Guilty Verdicts for 1st Degree Misdemeanors and 2nd Degree Misdemeanors Before and After Goddard's Law

Degree of Offense	Average Number of Charges Filed Per Month Before Goddard's Law	Average Number of Charges Filed Per Month After Goddard's Law	Average Number of Charges Per Month Found Guilty Before Goddard's Law	Average Number of Charges Per Month Found Guilty After Goddard's Law
M1	15.4 charges/month	15.4 charges/month	4.6 charges/month	4.9 charges/month
M2	36.9 charges/month	58.2 charges/month	15.7 charges/month	13.4 charges/month

Of the 2,499 charges filed, 1,101 (44%) were dismissed and 971 (39%) were found guilty (See Table 5). Before Goddard's Law, 22% of charges per month were found guilty, whereas after Goddard's Law, 31% of charges per month were found guilty. Also increasing was the

percent of charges per month that were dismissed. There were 26% of charges dismissed before Goddard's Law per month and 35% of charges dismissed per month after Goddard's Law.

Neither the change in found guilty or dismissal were statistically significant.

Table 5: Outcome of Charges Filed

Outcome of charge*	Misdemeanor (n=2311)		Felony (n=96)	
	Number of Total Charges	Percent of Total Charges	Number of Total Charges	Percent of Total Charges
Dismissed	1,052	46%	21	22%
Guilty	910	39%	31	32%
Order In	64	3%	0	0%
Withdrawn	50	2%	0	0%
Not Guilty	40	2%	0	0%
Forfeited	17	<1%	0	0%
Boundover	16	<1%	24 ♦	25%
Transferred	3	<1%*	10	10%

*See Appendix D for definitions of the outcomes

♦ This may represent an error since felonies are not typically boundover

Fines, jail time and other penalties were calculated by taking the penalty sentenced and subtracting the amount by which it was reduced at sentencing. For example, if 12 months of jail time were sentenced and 9 months were suspended, then 3 months were ordered to be served and this would be the number used for analysis in this study. For the charges in which the defendant was found guilty and sentenced to serve jail time, the mean duration served was 10.25 days (range 0 to 365 days). For those placed on probation, the mean duration was 34.79 months (range 1 to 60 months). The mean number of community service hours was 82.78 hours (range 8 to 500 hours). For those ordered to pay a fine, the mean amount, based on the sentenced amount minus the fine suspended amount, was \$155.34 (range \$0 to \$1,000). Only 2.4% (16/670) of the

defendants found guilty were required to go through a mental health assessment, which is similar to the 2.2% (15/670) who had to participate in some form of counseling. 32.8% (220/670) of defendants found guilty had animal restrictions placed on them, the half of those being no animals allowed (111/220) (See Table 6).

Table 6: Outcome of Sentencing for those Found Guilty

Outcome of Sentencing (n=971)	Mean Amount Before Goddard's Law (n=375)	Mean Amount After Goddard's Law (n=594)
Fine (sentenced – suspended)	\$171.69 (\$0-\$1,000)	\$145.84 (\$0-\$1,000)
Jail Time (sentenced-suspended)	11.55 days (0-242 days)	9.36 days (0-365 days)
Probation (sentenced-suspended)	36.61 months (1-60 months)	33.40 months (3-60 months)
Community Service	61.71 hours (8-400 hours)	98.41 hours (8-500 hours)
Animal Restrictions	26% (89/375)	29% (170/594)

Discussion:

This study is the first to examine the epidemiology of animal cruelty crimes in Ohio. A public records request was sent to Ohio's 231 courts of record to gather information about animal cruelty charges filed under ORC 959.13 between April 13, 2015 and April 13, 2018. Goddard's law, which went into effect in the middle of this study period, created ORC 959.131C which states that "No person shall knowingly cause serious physical harm to a companion animal." It further established that ORC 959.131C could be charged as either a misdemeanor or a felony at the discretion of the prosecution and in consideration of the severity of harm incurred.

The majority of the 2,499 charges filed in Ohio during the 3-year study period were 2nd degree misdemeanors leveled against Caucasian males, with an average age of 39. The

demographics of the defendants having charges filed against them and of the defendants found guilty did not change significantly following the passage of Goddard's Law when compared to the demographics prior to its passage.

Following the passage of Goddard's Law, there was a substantial increase in the total number of charges filed under section 959.131 of the Ohio Revised Code. Not only were 96 felonies filed after it was enacted, but there was an increase in both 1st and 2nd degree misdemeanor charges. The monthly average number of misdemeanor charges filed increased from 53 to 74. This shows that felony charges were not simply replacing misdemeanor charges that would have been filed in the absence of a felony option. There was a net increase in total charges. It is not clear whether this represents an increase in the actual number of cases, or whether it represents improved recognition, reporting, and investigating. The development and passage of Goddard's Law engaged animal welfare agencies and humane societies in addition to receiving a great deal of coverage in the media. It seems reasonable to assume that an increase in general awareness may explain some of the increase in charges noted. While the number of 1st and 2nd degree misdemeanors increased significantly after Goddard's Law, the actual number of charges resulting in a guilty charge did not increase significantly.

The highest number of charges by county were filed in Franklin county, which is not surprising given that it has one of the largest populations, and Columbus Humane has one of the largest Cruelty Investigation Departments in the state. It is difficult to isolate the relative impacts of population density, the number of humane agents, and other factors that may contribute to the number of animal cruelty cases occurring and being charged in a specific area. It makes sense that counties with specific agencies and departments whose only goal is identifying animal

cruelty would have more charges filed, since police officers may lack training specific to animal cruelty and, based on their mission, would prioritize people over animals.

There were a very large percentage of charges dismissed (44%) over the three-year study period. There are many reasons that dismissals may occur, such as lack of evidence or timing. It is important to recognize that the mean number of charges per person is 2 (1-25). In many cases where multiple charges are filed, some may be dropped while others result in some level of punishment for the criminal. Plea bargains are a common reason for dismissal of a charge. A plea bargain is when defendants and prosecutors reach an agreement without going to trial.¹¹ These often include dismissal of some charges in exchange for a guilty plea for other charges. Plea bargains can have a wide array of results, but often they will reduce punishment for the defendant so prosecutors can focus resources elsewhere.¹² Even though a large number of charges were dismissed, it does not mean that the charges were completely disregarded, and defendants did not face some type of penalty.

Penalties such as average fine amount, jail time, and probation decreased after Goddard's Law; whereas community service hours and animal restrictions increased. With the introduction of felony charges, one would expect the penalties to be more severe. However, in this study the outcomes and punishments for those defendants found guilty did not show a significant change after Goddard's Law. While the extent of suffering believed to have occurred may play a role in sentencing, it is not the only consideration. In Ohio, the law has established that 5th degree felony convictions can receive a maximum sentence of 6 to 12 months in prison and up to a \$2,500 fine, while a 1st degree misdemeanor carries a maximum penalty of 6 months in jail and up to a \$1,000 fine. However, sentencing guidelines as defined in the ORC 2929.13² dictate that 5th degree animal cruelty felonies against persons with no prior felony convictions or convictions of

violence are sentenced with community control sanctions (probation) rather than jail time. These sentencing guidelines also address fines and other penalties for various circumstances and degrees of felonies. Misdemeanor charges have similar sentencing guidelines (ORC 2929.22), but they are less restrictive and 1st degree misdemeanors are more likely to render a judgement at or near their maximum penalties. This means that the same crime may receive a more severe penalty if charged as a 1st degree misdemeanor than if it were charged as a 5th degree felony. On the other hand, a felony conviction has greater repercussions on future employment opportunities and the handling of any future crimes committed.

Additionally, differences in Municipal and County Courts as opposed to Common Pleas Courts may account for some prosecutors preferring to file misdemeanors through the lower court system. This may be due to familiarity with the judges, comparison to other cases seen in court, and differences in burden of proof on officers. There are many reasons why prosecutors may choose to pursue a misdemeanor charge as compared to a felony charge.

As with any study, there are limitations. While the response rate was quite high (92%), there still could be an impact from participation bias. The data provided could represent only part of the charges filed, leading to an under-representation of the actual number of animal cruelty charges filed in Ohio. This concern is highlighted by the number of courts responding to the public records request that they were unable to search their records by the specific charge filed (14%). Court records are not consistent across counties or levels, leading to some gaps in the data, and errors may have occurred during transfer of information from the court provided documents to the spreadsheet. These results provide a snapshot of information from the courts that responded within Ohio over a three-year period, that included a significant revision of the laws. More time will be needed to identify the full impact that Goddard's Law will have.

Additionally, this data was restricted to publicly available records, which did not allow an assessment of the risk factors associated with animal cruelty or the impact that Goddard's Law may have on prevention of these crimes.

In conclusion, this study has shown that the total number of animal cruelty charges increased after the passage of Goddard's Law, and remained elevated throughout the following 1.5 years. However, the number of guilty convictions remained largely unchanged. While there were no significant changes in the demographics of those committing the crimes, there was a trend that demonstrated a small decrease in average penalties, including jail time, fines, and probation, when compared to the average penalties before Goddard's Law passed. It is still early to tell what the true impacts of Goddard's Law may be, but these results shine a positive light on increasing animal cruelty charges; however, there was not much impact in regard to sentencing as of yet in Ohio. This line of research is of particular value to criminologists, law enforcement agencies, humane societies, and policy makers. These findings can inform policies such as new legislation and animal cruelty prevention efforts

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Appendix A: Public Records Request for Felony Charges

To: Clerk of Courts

Date: August 14, 2018

From: Anna Garrett
105A West Northwood Avenue
Columbus OH 43201
Phone: (513) 614-4401
Email: garrett.452@osu.edu

Public Records Request

I am requesting the records for every charge filed that included Section 959.131(C) of the Ohio Revised Code from September 13, 2016 through April 13, 2018. For these charges, I am requesting the specific charges filed, the case disposition, the plea entered, the specific date the charge was filed, and the degree of offense. In addition, I am requesting the name, race, age, and gender of the defendant the charges were filed against.

Note:

I hope you are having a nice day! I am submitting a public records request and I believe this is the correct place to do so. I am doing a research project on animal cruelty laws in Ohio, so I am looking to search by section of the Ohio Revised Code, instead of a name or case number which are required on the online database.

If this is not possible, a list of names/case numbers will suffice so I can search the online database. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via phone or email. Thanks so much!

Appendix B: Public Records Request for Misdemeanor Charges

To: Municipal/County Court

Date: August 14, 2018

From: Anna Garrett
105A West Northwood Avenue
Columbus OH 43201
Phone: (513) 614-4401
Email: garrett.452@osu.edu

Public Records Request

I am requesting the records for every charge filed included in Section 959.13 and 959.131 of the Ohio Revised Code from April 13, 2015 through April 13, 2018. For these charges, I am requesting the specific charges filed, the plea entered, the specific date the charge was filed, the degree of offense, and case disposition. In addition, I am requesting the name, race, age, and gender of the defendant the charges were filed against.

Note:

I hope you are having a nice day! I am submitting a public records request and I believe this is the correct place to do so. I am doing a research project on animal cruelty laws in Ohio, so I am looking to search by section of the Ohio Revised Code, instead of a name or case number which are required on the online database.

If this is not possible, a list of names/case numbers will suffice so I can search the online database. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via phone or email. Thanks so much!

Appendix C: Penalties & Ohio Revised Code Sections

Degree Offense¹³	Maximum Fine (\$)	Maximum Jail Time
Minor Misdemeanor	\$150	none
4 th Degree Misdemeanor	\$250	30 days
3 rd Degree Misdemeanor	\$500	60 days
2 nd Degree Misdemeanor	\$750	90 days
1 st Degree Misdemeanor	\$1,000	180 days
5 th Degree Felony	\$2,500	6-12 months
4 th Degree Felony	\$5,000	6-18 months
3 rd Degree Felony	\$10,000	9-60 months
2 nd Degree Felony	\$15,000	2-8 years
1 st Degree Felony	\$20,000	3-11 years

ORC Charge²	Name of Charge Section	Degree Offense
959.01	Abandoning Animals	M2 (1 st), M1 (subsequent)
959.02	Injuring Animals	M2 /M1
959.06	Destruction of domestic animals	M4
959.12	Alteration of Brands	M4
959.13A	Cruelty to Animals	M2
959.131B	Prohibitions concerning companion animals	M1 (1 st), F5 (subsequent)
959.131C	Prohibitions concerning companion animals	F5
959.131D	Prohibitions concerning companion animals	M2 (1 st), M1 (subsequent)
959.131E	Prohibitions concerning companion animals	F5
959.131F	Prohibitions concerning companion animals	M1
959.14	Horse Tails	M2 (1 st), M1 (subsequent)

Appendix D: Legal Term Definitions^{9,10}

Boundover- municipal court finds that a felony has occurred. It does not have jurisdiction so binds the case over to Common Pleas Court- Specific charge is dropped, but same or different charges can be re-introduced.

Forfeiture- To lose or to be forced to give up property, a right, or a privilege as a result of error, misconduct, crime, or negligence.

Guilty- court finding of guilt through admission, an act of a jury or an act of a court

No Contest- a defendant denies guilt, but admits to the facts on which the charge is based, leaving the verdict solely on the judge to determine the verdict

Not Guilty- court finds that there is not proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt

Order in- defendant did not show up so there is an order issued for arrest. The charge is still pending.

Reduced- The change of a penalty to one that is less severe

Withdrawn- charges are dismissed at the request of the prosecution, they may or may not be re-introduced at a later date